

for our own security. That is ridiculous. Quit idealizing the United Nations for what it is not. It is not an international body that is run by saints. Instead, it is run by ordinary democratic countries, but also by despicable regimes which terrorize their own population.

Requiring the President, our President to get permission from the United Nations means we are requiring our President to make deals with governments like the Communist Chinese before doing what is necessary for our own security. No wonder the repressed people of China, like the Falun Gong, who had their demonstration here yesterday, like the people of Tibet, like the people of East Turkistan are afraid that our President may well make an agreement with the bosses in Beijing who terrorize them at the expense of those people who long for freedom.

We should not be relying on the United Nations. No, we should be relying on our strength and our commitment to those ideals that our Founding Fathers set forth so many years ago and have been fought for so many times by Americans. Let us remember what George Washington told us: "Put only Americans on guard tonight."

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Maine (Mr. ALLEN).

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time.

I wish to respond to some of the comments made just now by the gentleman from California (Mr. ROHRBACHER) and earlier by the distinguished chairman of the Committee on International Relations, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE).

It is true that this resolution seeks to have the United States first act in a multilateral basis through the U.N., but we are not transferring the job of protecting Americans to the United Nations. In section 8 of this resolution it says, "inherent right to self-defense." Nothing in this joint resolution, the Spratt substitute, is intended to derogate or otherwise limit the authority of the President to use military force and self-defense pursuant to the Constitution of the United States and the War Powers resolution.

But there is a reason why we need to act on a multilateral basis. It is because if we act against Saddam's weapons of mass destruction together with allies, we are less likely to provoke an Islamic fundamentalist uprising in the Middle East. We are more likely to diminish the number of recruits to Osama bin Laden, not to accentuate the number of recruits to terrorist causes.

Insofar as people have suggested this is a steeple chase or they are roadblocks to getting the second resolution passed, it is a week-long proposition. Come back, we have the resolution laid out in this substitute, there are no amendments, no points of order, it comes to the floor, we will have a debate of 20 hours, and it will be done.

This is critical. This is as important a vote as the vote on final passage, and I urge Members to support the Spratt substitute.

Mr. HYDE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BOEHNER).

Mr. BOEHNER. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Illinois for yielding me this time.

I rise today in strong opposition to the amendment offered by our friend, the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SPRATT). The amendment in the nature of a substitute basically puts us in a position of having to go to the U.N. and get a resolution of support or, if the U.N. cannot act or will not act, requires the Congress to come back and to have another vote.

I think one of the points that is missing in this debate is that it seems as though people think the President is not acting in a unilateral way.

We are the only superpower on the face of the Earth. We as a Nation, as a result, have a responsibility to lead. I think that the underlying resolution does, in fact, strengthen the President's hand to lead and to continue to build multilateral support. I believe that the amendment offered today basically undercuts the President's ability to continue to lead us and to build a multilateral action.

Secondly, the President is being very deliberate about this. This effort has been under way for the last 8 weeks. The President continues to consult with Members of Congress in both bodies, continues to work with our allies, continues to work with the U.N., and I think all of us would agree that the President made a forceful case for action because he was at the U.N.

Again, the amendment that we have before us handcuffs the President in terms of his ability to continue to bring about positive action at the United Nations.

Now, we have 16 amendments passed by the United Nations over the last 11 years dealing with chemical and biological weapons. What makes us believe that Saddam Hussein or anyone else who is going to act, if in fact the U.N. would ever act? But more importantly, why would we want to put the security and the freedom of the people of our country at risk or put them in the hands of the U.N. Security Council in hoping, maybe, that they will act.

The fact is in 1991 during the Gulf War we had a debate here and we kept hearing the same thing we are hearing now: wait, wait, wait. If we had waited any longer in 1991, the Iraqi regime would have been into Saudi Arabia and we would have had a much larger crisis than we have. The fact is that we have waited for a long time to bring this regime to a halt and to take away their threat, and I believe the underlying resolution done by the majority leader and the Speaker, along with the minority leader, gives the President the strongest hand possible in terms of building a multilateral coalition and,

most importantly, protecting the American people whom we are sent here to represent.

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Maine (Mr. BALDACC).

(Mr. BALDACC asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BALDACC. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the Spratt amendment as the right way to security; not having to go it alone, but with the help of our allies.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today with a heavy heart. The decision whether or not to send our young men and women into war is the most difficult one a Member of Congress can face. In considering this matter, I have done considerable research, been briefed by the White House, talked with my colleagues and listened to the voices of the people of Maine.

It is clear that Saddam Hussein is a dangerous dictator. He has not hesitated to attack his neighbors, and even his own people. Since weapons inspectors were forced out of Iraq in 1998, we know that Hussein has taken steps to rebuild his chemical and biological weapons production capability. We have strong evidence that he is beginning to rebuild his nuclear program. Based on all that we have seen, in the past and in the present, it is clear that the Iraqi regime is a threat to international peace and security.

I am convinced that it is in the best interests of our Nation and our world that we eliminate these weapons of mass destruction. If Hussein does not use them directly, I believe there is a good chance that he will provide them to other terrorists who will. This situation cannot stand.

The question now before us is how to achieve our common goal of disarming Saddam Hussein. I am not supportive of a unilateral pre-emptive strike. As President Bush said on Tuesday night, force must be our last resort, not our first. I am convinced that we will be strongest if we address this situation with the support of a multilateral coalition.

For that reason, I will be supporting Representative SPRATT's substitute that calls for just such a multilateral approach. This resolution echoes the President's speech in which we urged the adoption of a new U.N. resolution that seeks to disarm Hussein, and if that resolution proves ineffective, calls for a coalition to disarm him. This substitute supports the President's intention to exhaust diplomatic approaches to disarming Iraq while still ensuring that he will be able to take action against Iraq if these methods prove ineffective.

To me, the most significant difference between Mr. SPRATT's approach and that of the administration is that Mr. SPRATT keeps Congress closely involved as the decision-making process moves forward, as is consistent with our Constitutional duty. Under the substitute, the administration will be required to return to Congress when and if it determines that diplomatic avenues have been pursued and have failed. At that time, expedited procedures will be in place to authorize military action if necessary.

When we are dealing with issues of this magnitude, I believe that there needs to be true consultation between the Congress and the administration. Simple notification is not enough. I agree that we need to speak with